

# CITY CONNECTION

## Backhoe Rodeo

Crew members from the City's Public Works department used a steady touch and keen vision to maneuver a 15,000-pound piece of equipment through a challenging obstacle course in this year's Backhoe Rodeo. The friendly contest not only shines a spotlight on the skills of street, water, electric and maintenance workers, but also highlights how important those skills are in keeping everyone safe.

"This event helps get employees excited about safety," Risk and Safety Analyst Jeff Stephens explains. "This is much better training than watching a safety video."

Maintenance Worker Christian Torres, who doesn't ordinarily work with heavy equipment found the competition a welcome relief after a stressful last year. "It gives us a chance to have some fun, but it's a learning experience because machines can be dangerous."

Traffic Control Technician Chris Keys, who sometimes uses heavy equipment to dig ditches noted how challenging the contest was in comparison to everyday work. "The Rodeo is not like the normal work we do. It focuses on fine motor skills."

And what sorts of challenges did Rodeo competitors face? Imagine putting together giant puzzle pieces. Now imagine picking up the chain holding the puzzle pieces with the teeth of a backhoe's bucket, and moving the pieces so they fit inside another piece. Or bumping a tennis ball into the backhoe's bucket and moving it into a small container—all without knocking over pylons or upsetting basketballs sitting atop a fence made of pipes.

Even those crew members who had never operated heavy equipment



**Don Neal**, Street Department Backhoe Rodeo Winner

were welcomed to the competition, and those with a natural ability to work the backhoe's levers might advance in their departments, get the necessary training, and become regular operators.

Allison Rock of the Street Department was happy to try her hands at the controls for the first time, calling the experience "fun and a great team-building experience."



The object of this exercise is to get the square peg into the square hole using the backhoe. Not easy.

The first Rodeo, held in 2019, was interrupted by the pandemic last year. This is planned to be an annual event along with the annual Street Department Snowplow Rodeo, which tests and sharpens the skills of snowplow operators.



Here, the operator moves an object through an obstacle, not touching the basketballs, into a square resting place.





# A Moment with the Mayor



**Mayor Michelle Davis-Younger**

HAPPY JULY EVERYONE! We have celebrated Mother's Day, Father's Day and by now you have no doubt celebrated the 4th of July. There's just something about the 4th of July that makes me stop and take a moment to truly reflect on the incredible independence this country has afforded

its residents. I am definitely guilty of taking all the rights and privileges I have for granted, but nothing reminds me more of the battles fought to gain a diverse range of freedoms than celebrating Independence Day. This holiday is about more than backyard barbecues, fireworks, and a day off of work, although those are all great, too.

It seems like now, more than ever, there is such an indescribable value placed on equality, freedom and justice in America. The importance of the hard-won victories in civil rights, gender equality and the LGBTQ community all culminate into an overwhelming sense of pride in our country's ability to bring about change, fight for progress and succeed when everyone finds the resolve to work together.

Last year at this time, we were not having any of these types of celebrations and when you turned on the news, checked your phone or scrolled through your news feed, it

was so easy to get a little down in the dumps about how bad things were. However, one quote that always comes to mind to keep me from getting sad, is:

"In the face of impossible odds, people who love this country can change it." — President Barack Obama

This month, my family has two back-to-back birthday celebrations; first, my son, Joseph turned 22 on July 4, and on July 6 let's just say I turned more than 22, LOL.

The City Council is diligently working for you to keep the City moving forward. We are starting to open up and enjoy all that our City has to offer. Please make sure you are visiting all of our shops and restaurants. Our First Friday's have returned and we are looking forward to all of the fun times ahead in summer 2021. It sure looks a lot different than the summer of 2020! See you soon!

## Recycling News

### Scheduling Glass for Collection

In a greater effort to ensure the safety of our residents and collection crews, the City of Manassas has introduced new collection instructions for scheduling and setting out large pieces of glass, such as windows, doors, table tops and mirrors.

Please help us reduce incidents of loose and broken glass in the street and on sidewalks by making sure that all large glass is scheduled for collection. All large glass must be packed or covered in cardboard, sealed, closed with tape, and labeled "GLASS".

All large amounts of broken glass must be scheduled for collection and set out in cardboard boxes, sealed, closed with tape, and labeled "GLASS".

Unpacked or loose glass will not be collected.

For more information, visit [www.manassasva.gov/trash](http://www.manassasva.gov/trash) or call 703-257-8252.

### Big Summer Shred

It's back by popular demand! Join Keep Manassas Beautiful for our hot summer shredding, household hazardous waste and electronics drop off day on **Saturday, August 7** from 8 a.m. - 12 p.m. at the Manassas Transfer Station located at 8305 Quarry Road (off Liberia Avenue.)

Your safety and privacy are secured as you watch your documents shredded right in front of you using a state-of-the-art cross-shredding device.

There is a maximum of three filing storage boxes allowed. Please remove all clips and binders before drop-off. No commercial shredding will be accepted.

Residents may drop off: paint, oil, gasoline, pool chemicals, small propane tanks, weed killers, pesticides, batteries, fluorescent lights, grease, televisions, computers, telephones, electronic games and speakers.

For more information, visit [www.manassasva.gov/trash](http://www.manassasva.gov/trash) or call 703-257-8252.

## BIG SUMMER SHRED

**Saturday  
August 7, 2021  
8 a.m. - 12 p.m.**  
**Manassas Transfer Station  
8305 Quarry Road  
(off Liberia Avenue)**

**What can you shred?**

- Bank Account Statements
- Correspondence
- Job Applications
- Profit/Loss Statements
- Brokerage Reports
- Credit Card Statements
- Legal Documents
- Cancelled Checks
- Financial Reports
- Medical Records
- Social Security Numbers
- Confidential Letters
- Insurance Policies
- Pay-stubs
- Tax Records
- Contracts
- Invoices and Receipts
- Photographs

**There is a three box maximum for shredding.  
Commercial shredding is not accepted due to volume.**

**More Information: (703) 257-8252 or [www.manassasva.gov/trash](http://www.manassasva.gov/trash)**



# A Message from the City Manager



**City Manager**  
**W. Patrick Pate**

Did you enjoy the July 4th fireworks? I hope that you did and have been able to participate in many of the large variety of City events that are beginning to reappear as our COVID-19 vaccination percentages continue to rise. Last month saw the return of the Railway Festival and the Jazz Festival along with several other outdoor events like the new Bee Festival. The farmer's markets are seeing great crowds each week and plans for vacation trips seem to be back in the general discussions.

All of this points to life returning to the new normal. I was able to attend "in person" a graduation, a funeral and a retirement celebration last month and I am told that it is almost impossible to book a wedding venue. Celebrations of the various milestones in life are meant to be shared experiences. Even our ordinary day-to-day activities that bring us enjoyment, like meeting friends for a meal, a family gathering or even going to Church or a ballgame, revolve around sharing those experiences with others. As humans we want to be in community.

While it is exciting to be resuming lives full of social interactions, it is also important to maintain our diligence in the fight against spreading germs. Many individuals have immune deficiency diseases and others are just highly susceptible to a variety of conditions that could result in serious illnesses or even fatalities. Many of these individuals are still leery of the restriction

relaxations. We also know that the recent period of relative isolation has impacted the mental health of many individuals in our community. So, I ask you to continue to be mindful and patient with others who might not be willing to jump right back into the pre-pandemic life as quickly as you might be willing to do.

For the City, the start of July also represents the start of a new "fiscal" year. Our new budget and capital improvement plan have been adopted that puts plans in motion to improving the City and providing services for the next year. Due to good growth in our real estate assessments (like residential property values), City Council was able to reduce the real estate tax rate by 3.1 cents while maintaining or enhancing City services. A plan was adopted to fund the replacement of Dean Elementary School in 2026, as requested by the School Board, and to increase efforts towards maintaining other City infrastructure like roads, parks and utilities.

Our financial position is excellent

as Standard and Poor's has recently confirmed our AAA rating with a stable outlook. This is the highest rating available. During the upcoming year the City will be using bond funds to complete construction of the Public Safety Facility, expanding the Manassas Museum, to make park improvements at Dean Park, to restore streams at the Liberia House, retrofit the Lucasville Regional Stormwater Pond, complete water and sewer line improvements and begin renovations at City facilities to improve customer service.

As you are reading this, I hope that you are enjoying the summer and participating in many activities, events and programs that you could not do last summer. I suspect that quite a few of you are excited to be planning for the beginning of a new year of in-person school next month. There has been a lot going on in Manassas over this summer and we hope that is a trend that will continue to grow.

*W. Patrick Pate*

**MANASSAS CITY LIBRARY**

**New Manassas Library Open**  
**Hours beginning July 6**

Monday – Wednesday:  
10:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.


Thursday – Saturday:  
10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

*Curbside Pickup:*  
Monday – Thursday:  
11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.



Prince William Public Libraries  
(PWPL) will no longer charge fines  
for late items beginning July 1.


**NEED HELP  
PAYING BILLS  
BECAUSE OF  
COVID- 19?**



The City of Manassas can help with Utilities, Rent/mortgage, Childcare, or Burial costs due to COVID-19

Apply online today. It's safe, easy and takes only a few minutes at [www.manassasva.gov/assistance](http://www.manassasva.gov/assistance)

There's still time to get help. We know COVID-19 took its toll on families this year. Visit [www.manassasva.gov/assistance](http://www.manassasva.gov/assistance)





# The City of Manassas Happenings

Find these events and more in the City of Manassas, Virginia. For more information go to [www.visitmanassas.org](http://www.visitmanassas.org).

## Farmer's Market for the Season:

Thursday Farmer's Market at the Harris Pavilion and Saturday Farmer's Market on Prince William Street Commuter Lot - Hours for both are 8 a.m. – 1 p.m.

July 4 from 3 - 10 p.m. - **Celebrate America** with Fireworks in Historic Downtown Manassas

July 10 from 8 a.m.-noon - **Household Hazardous Waste and Electronics Recycling Drop-off Day** at the Manassas Transfer Station

July 10 at 10 a.m. & 11 a.m.- **Liberia House Tours** by the Manassas Museum

July 20 at 7 p.m. - Acoustic Tuesday with **Sharif** at the Harris Pavilion

July 22 at 5:30 p.m. - **Downtown Walking Tours** by the Manassas Museum

July 24 at 6:30 p.m. - Summer Sounds Concert with **Shenandoah Run** at the Harris Pavilion

July 27 at 7 p.m. - Acoustic Tuesday with **Lucas John** at the Harris Pavilion

July 28 at 3 PM - Stories of Preservation and Progress with the **Virginia Quilt Museum**

July 31 at 7 p.m. - Saturday Night Concert with the **Silver Tones Swing Band** at the Harris Pavilion

Aug. 1 at 3 p.m. - Sunday Funday Concert - **Washington Balalaika Society** at the Harris Pavilion

Aug. 3 at 7 p.m. - Acoustic Tuesday with **Tender Polman** at the Harris Pavilion

Aug. 7, 8 a.m. to noon - **Household Hazardous Waste, Shredding and Electronics Recycling Drop-off Day** at the Manassas Transfer Station

Aug. 7 at 6:30 p.m. - Summer Sounds Concert with **Lil' Maceo Kareem Walkes** at the Harris Pavilion

Aug. 10 at 7 p.m. - Acoustic Tuesday with **Shane Gamble** at the Harris Pavilion

Aug. 14 at 6:30 p.m. - Summer Sounds Concert with **The Splinters** at the Harris Pavilion

Aug. 14 at 10 a.m. & 11 a.m. - **Liberia House Tours** with the Manassas Museum

Aug. 17 at 7 p.m. - Acoustic Tuesday with **Scott Kurt** at the Harris Pavilion

Aug. 21 from 6:30 to 10 p.m. - Manassas Ballet Theatre's **17th Annual Ballet Ball** at the Harris Pavilion

Aug. 22 at 3 p.m. - Sunday Funday Concert - **Navy Sea Chanters** at the Harris Pavilion

Aug. 24 at 7 p.m. - Acoustic Tuesday with **Brian Harris** at the Harris Pavilion

Aug. 25 at 3 PM -- Stories of Preservation and Progress with the **Gum Springs Historical Society and Museum**

Aug. 26 at 5:30 PM- **Downtown Walking Tours** with the Manassas Museum

Aug. 28 - Liberia Front Porch Talk with the **Slave Dwelling Project**

Aug. 28 at 7 p.m. - Saturday Night Concert with **Special Occasions Band** at the Harris Pavilion

Aug. 29 at 3 p.m. - Sunday Funday Concert - **U.S. Army Band** at the Harris Pavilion

Aug. 31 at 7 p.m. - Acoustic Tuesday with **Jason Morton** at the Harris Pavilion

Check out some of the great classes at the ArtFactory @ [www.virginiaartfactory.org](http://www.virginiaartfactory.org)



Want to pre-order your City of Manassas 150th Anniversary license plate? Visit <https://cityofmanassas.recdesk.com>.

## City of Manassas and Manassas Public Schools

### City of Manassas Council Mayor Michelle Davis-Younger

#### Vice Mayor

Pamela J. Sebesky 571-330-5514  
Theresa Coates Ellis 571-247-6729  
David Farajollahi 703-209-6320  
Tom Osina 703-304-3984  
Ralph J. Smith 703-303-8530  
Mark D. Wolfe 703-257-1702

### City of Manassas School Board

Chairman Sanford S. Williams 571-377-7497  
Vice Chair Suzanne W. Seaberg

Christina S. Brooks 571-377-7491  
Tim Demeria 571-377-7492  
Carl Hollingsworth Jr. 571-377-7493  
Lisa A. Stevens 571-377-7495  
Robyn Williams 571-377-7496

## Get Social!

Visit the City at [www.manassasva.gov](http://www.manassasva.gov)

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[www.instagram.com/cityofmanassas](https://www.instagram.com/cityofmanassas)

[www.youtube.com/user/manassascityva](https://www.youtube.com/user/manassascityva)

To contact the City of Manassas Connection newsletter, email [pprince@manassasva.gov](mailto:pprince@manassasva.gov)